

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 072549 TOSEC 030231
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY PRIORITY

WHITE HOUSE PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 072549 TOSEC 030231

NODIS

WHITE HOUSE FOR BRZEZINSKI ONLY

FOLLOWING REPEAT MANAGUA 1535 SENT ACTION SECSTATE 01 APR 77

QUOTE S E C R E T MANAGUA 1535

NODIS

FOR SECRETARY VANCE FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, NU

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT SOMOZA'S MESSAGE TO SECRETARY AND PRESIDENT
REGARDING APRIL 5 CONGRESSIONAL HEARING ON HUMAN RIGHTS

1. PRESIDENT SOMOZA CALLED ME TO HIS OFFICE ON THE EVENING OF
MARCH 31. HE INFORMED ME THAT HE WAS DEEPLY DISTURBED OVER THE
FORTHCOMING SPECIAL HEARING ON NICARAGUA SCHEDULED BY THE FOREIGN
OPERATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE FOR
APRIL 5. PRESIDENT DECLARED THAT HE FEARED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT
WOULD NOT RECEIVE A FAIR AND BALANCED HEARING. HE ADDED THAT
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CONGRESSMAN KOCH WAS SPREADING FALSE AND DEFAMATORY STATEMENTS
ABOUT HIM AND HIS GOVERNMENT, INCLUDING ERRONEOUS ACCUSATIONS
ABOUT MISUSE OF U.S. AID FUNDS WHICH THE DEPARTMENT HAD REFUTED.

2. THE PRESIDENT ASKED ME SPECIFICALLY TO CONVEY TO YOU IN THE
STRONGEST TERMS HIS DESIRE THAT THE DEPARTMENT PRESENT A FULL
BALANCED PICTURE OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN NICARAGUA. HE

SAID THAT HE WAS DISMAYED AT UNDERSECRETARY BENSON'S TESTIMONY ON NICARAGUA BEFORE THE LONG SUBCOMMITTEE WHICH HAD BEEN FORWARDED TO HIM FROM WASHINGTON. SOMOZA HOPED THE DEPARTMENT WOULD NOT ACCEPT AT FACE VALUE THE UNPROVEN ALLEGATIONS OF CONGRESSMAN KOCH. HE SAID THAT HE ADMIRERED PRESIDENT CARTER'S STAND ON HUMAN RIGHTS BUT EXPECTED UNDERSTANDING OF THE DIFFICULT TERRORIST PROBLEM FACING HIS GOVERNMENT.

3. THE PRESIDENT SAID THAT HE WAS THE TARGET OF A VICIOUS CAMPAIGN TO HARM HIS GOVERNMENT AND WEAKEN TIES WITH THE UNITED STATES BECAUSE HE HAS BEEN A LOYAL FRIEND AND ALLY. NOT ONLY HAD HE SUFFERED CALUMNY IN THE PAST BECAUSE OF HIS FRIENDSHIP AND SUPPORT FOR THE UNITED STATES, BUT NOW HE WAS BEING UNJUSTLY ATTACKED BY CONGRESSMAN KOCH IN THE U.S. CONGRESS WHO WANTED TO CUT OFF ALL MILITARY AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO NICARAGUA.

4. SOMOZA ENDED BY AGAIN URGING THE DEPARTMENT TO PRESENT A WELL BALANCED PICTURE OF THE PRO-CASTRO INSURGENCY FACED BY HIS GOVERNMENT, THE KILLING OF GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS BY TERRORISTS, AND THE PROBLEMS OF RE-ESTABLISHING ORDER IN THE RURAL AREAS. HE SAID THAT THE DEPARTMENT SHOULD NOT ALLOW FALSE OR UNPROVEN ALLEGATIONS TO STAND AS FACTS, EXPLAIN THE SCRUPULOUS CARE WITH WHICH THE GON HAS USED U.S. FUNDS ENTRUSTED TO IT UNDER THE AID PROGRAM, AND CONVEY THIS TO ALL THE MEMBERS OF FOREIGN OPERATIONS COMMITTEE. HE ASSERTED THAT THE CONSEQUENCES WOULD BE EXTREMELY SERIOUS IF THE CONGRESSMEN ON THE COMMITTEE FOLLOWED CONGRESSMAN KOCH'S LEAD OUT OF IGNORANCE OR MISREPRESENTATION OF THE FACTS.

5. HE ASKED ME TO PLEASE CONVEY THIS MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT CARTER
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AS WELL.

6. I BELIEVE IT IS A MATTER OF SUFFICIENT IMPORTANCE AND SENSITIVITY TO BRING TO THE PRESIDENT'S ATTENTION.
THEBERGE

UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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